



January 6, 2006

TechNews is a guide to share information regarding deadlines, events and software version release dates. The intended audiences are PCHA and FPA-PM application users. New FPA updates, changes and work arounds to PCHA and FPA-PM are listed below. Web site links relative to the software updates are also highlighted.

Visit the FPA home page (<http://www.fpa.nifc.gov/>) for the redesigned and reorganized User Guides for FPA-PM and BDD.

Weighting Issues: With several analyses now submitted for generating the National Cost Effectiveness Analysis (CEA) several issues related to the weighting process have become apparent.

- The multiplier used to convert the “raw” integer weights to the whole numbers used in FPA-PM must be 100 to ensure consistency nationally.
- The second issue relates to the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) weight of 1 as the common currency. **The maximum Implicit Attribute Price (IAP) value for WUI is to be set at 1.0 for Fire Intensity Level 6 (FILs) at all Sensitivity Periods.**

For those Fire Planning Units (FPU) that have completed the weighting process for the 2008 analysis there is no need to make changes due to the additional workload. To allow the national analysts to complete the CEA we are requiring that when the Budget Range Optimal (BRO) analysis is submitted, all FPU's must submit their weighting worksheet as an email attachment sent to the following address: fa_fpa@nifc.blm.gov. The national analysts will make any necessary adjustments in Boise.

Following the 2008 budget submission there will be a revised set of weighting instructions issued for 2009.

Progress Reports: A reminder that progress reports are due on January 9. There has been some realignment of tasks within the ICG. Please send the progress reports to Jerry Barnes (email: Gerald_Barnes@blm.gov.) The progress reports are used to inform the FPA Steering Committee, agency fire directors, and others about the progress being made for the first FPA budget submission.

Lookup Dataset Issues: Occasionally there may be a unit that is missing a “parent” organization. This will show up as an error message when 1) Entering a participant in the FPU; 2) Changing the status of a participant from budgeted to non-budgeted or vice versa; 3) when data validation occurs during the analysis; and 4) when attempting to submit a Budget Optimal Run.

For the short-term fix, if this error occurs, check to see if the participant is actually budgeted or not, then let either your ICG representative or the helpdesk know what the unit identifier is and what the next level unit identifier is. As an example, for the California Desert District of BLM the unit id is CACDD; the next unit up is the California State Office, unit id CACSO.

There is a move underway to resolve the inconsistencies in the unit data nationally and hopefully this issue will be resolved by the FY 2009 submission.

BDD Items: The following table contains some of the types of preparedness costs and how they fit into PM and BDD.

Type of Cost	PM	BDD
<p>There are 4 categories of employment status based on NWCG standards. These categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career • Career Seasonal, Supervisory • Career Seasonal, Non Supervisory • Temporary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career: Funding is for 26 pay periods per year. • Career Seasonal (Supervisory and Non-Supervisory): Funding is required for at least 13, two-week periods and is not to exceed 26, two-week periods per year. • Temporary: Funding is required for at least 7, two-week periods. For Fireline Producers, if the funding period for Temporaries is generated for 13 or more pay periods this position will be funded as a Career Seasonal. • Employment status for Fireline Producers is based on Geographic Area standard staffing configurations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be entered by the Fire Planner in BDD
Personnel Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Career and Career Seasonal employees, base pay will be calculated based on the midlevel step of a pay grade (i.e. GS-9 step5). • Temporary employee's base pay will be calculated as the first step of a pay grade (i.e. GS-4 step 1). • Uses OPM wage tables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated in BDD the same as PM
Locality COLA Shortage/Specialty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on staffing area as input by Fire Planner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For Fireline Producers, it is based on the dispatch location staffing area ○ For Leadership and Support positions, it is based o the FPU general staffing area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated in BDD the same as PM
Benefits percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated on adjusted hourly • Includes off season insurance for Career Seasonal employees, Medicare, OASDI, FERS, CSRS, OWCP, UCI, thrift plan, retirement, life & health insurance, and uniforms • Currently calculated at 45% for Career and Career Seasonal employees. • 3% for Temporary employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated in BDD the same as PM
Travel/Training percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated on base salary • Includes travel costs, per diem allowance, lodging, tuition, and other incidental expenses • Currently calculated at 10% for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be entered by the Fire Planner in BDD
Supply percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated on base salary • Includes items such as radio, PPE, computer, supplies • Currently calculated at 5% for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be entered by the Fire Planner in

		BDD
Medical percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated on base salary • Fitness, work capacity test, preparedness related medical services • Currently calculated at 2% for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated in BDD the same as PM
Misc. personnel costs percent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be calculated as an additional percent added to each position. Calculated on adjusted hourly. • Includes Sunday pay, paid holidays worked, planned overtime, paid holidays worked. Note: since FPA PM includes budgets for 7 day coverage, no additional overtime for 7 day coverage will be included. • Currently calculated at 3% for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculated in BDD the same as PM
Length of Employment for Fireline Producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Fireline Producers the length of employment is based on the Historical Analysis (HA) preparedness season. (See “<i>Funding Period for Production Personnel in FPA PM</i>” white paper). Fire resources will receive the following additional funding based on employment status: • All Fireline producers will receive an additional 2, two-week periods to accomplish necessary training, pre-season preparation, and post-season shut-down activities beyond preparedness season. • In addition, Career Seasonal Supervisory employees will receive two additional two-week periods to provide time for administrative functions. • In addition, Career Seasonal Non-supervisory employees get one additional pay period for admin functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be entered by the Fire Planner in BDD
Fire Leadership and Support positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fire Planner determines the grade, employment status, and length of employment for Leadership and Support positions. • Salary adjustments listed above (benefits, travel/training, supplies, etc.) is included by PM. • Fire Leadership and Support positions receive an Equipment O&M allocation which is a geographic area standard to represent cost of a vehicle. It is derived from Geographic Area provided inputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be entered by the Fire Planner in BDD